

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 FBO-01 L-03 PRS-01 M-03 A-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5635

INFO AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 8335

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID IN

SUBJECT: STAFF APARTMENT OCCUPANCY

REF: STATE 140392

1. IN MY NO LONGER BRIEF CAREER IN DIPLOMACY STATE 140392 IS THE FIRST PRIORITY CABLE I HAVE RECEIVED WITH THE REQUEST FOR A PRIORITY REPLY. AS A POLITICAL SCIENTIST I WOULD HAVE PREDICTED THE SUBJECT OF SUCH URGENT INQUIRY WOULD HAVE BEEN OFFICE SPACE, BUT MY SECOND CHOICE, AND IN THIS INSTANCE THE CORRECT ONE, WOULD HAVE BEEN STAFF HOUSING.

2. THE CABLE BEGINS "ASSUMING THAT USAID/INDIA WOULD RETAIN SOUTH SITE STAFF APARTMENTS." IT WON'T DO ANYBODY ANY GOOD TO ASSUME ANY SUCH THING. I HAVE ALREADY TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT WE ARE TURNING THE COMPLEX OVER TO HER. WE WERE SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED TO DO THIS BY USAID LAST APRIL. I QUITE UNDERSTAND THAT IT MIGHT APPEAR THAT WE ARE OFF OUR ROCKER OUT HERE BUT IT COMES DOWN TO A SIMPLE MATTER OF GOOD FAITH. THE TRUST ACCOUNT AGREEMENT OF MAY 3, 1966 THROUGH WHICH THE COMPLEX WAS BUILT STATES QUOTE NONEXPENDABLE PROPERTY SHALL BE TRANSFERRED TO THE GOI WHEN NO LONGER REQUIRED FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAM...UNQUOTE. WE MIGHT HAVE TRIED TO WEASEL OUT, BUT YOU WOULD NEED

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ANOTHER AMBASSADOR FOR SUCH WORK. THE UNITED STATES OF

AMERICA KEEPS ITS WORD.

3. I AM SORRY ABOUT THE SOUTH BUILDING. BELIEVE ME. ONCE EVERY TWO WEEKS OR SO I TAKE THE FAMILY DOWN THERE DROP FIVE DOLLARS (MY LIMIT) IN THE STATELY ROW OF SILENT SLOT MACHINES, DRINK A FEW BEAUTIFULLY COLD BEERS IN THE PAUL REVERE COCKTAIL LOUNGE AND THEN DINE (BEST CHINESE CAKES IN TOWN) IN THE WILLIAMSBURG DINING ROOM. THE PLACE IS MARVELOUS EXCEPT THAT WE ARE ALWAYS THE ONLY PEOPLE THERE AND THE WAITERS AND THE KIDS SAY IT IS KIND OF SPOOKY. IF WE COULD TURN IT OVER TO THE SMITHSONIAN IT WOULD MAKE A MARVELOUS MEMORIAL TO A CERTAIN KIND OF MENTALITY. ALONG WITH, SAY, CAM RANH BAY. BUT THAT REALLY ISN'T PRACTICAL IS IT?

4. I AM SORRY THE STORY GOT INTO THE WASHINGTON POST, BUT SURELY THAT WILL PASS. IF ANYBODY WANTS TO GET UPSET IT SHOULD BE AT THE PEOPLE WHO DECIDED TO BUILD THE DAMN PLACE IN THE FIRST INSTANCE. NOTHING ANYWHERE QUITE SO BRILLIANTLY EMBODIES PARKINSON'S LAW TO THE EFFECT THAT INSTITUTIONS BUILD THEIR GREAT BUILDINGS AT JUST THE MOMENT THEIR DECLINE SETS IN. BUT HONEST, NOBODY HERE WAS IN ANYWAY INVOLVED EXCEPT MY ADMINISTRATIVE COUNSELOR WHO SPECIFICALLY PROTESTED THE PROPOSAL WHEN IT WAS FIRST MADE.

5. WITH REGARDS TO THE WASHINGTON POST STORY, IT IS TRUE THAT A TWELVE UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING HAS JUST BEEN COMPLETED HERE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I AM TO DO ABOUT IT. I CAN TEAR IT DOWN OR GIVE IT AWAY. OTHERWISE I MEAN TO FILL IT UP WITH AMERICAN STAFF AND USE IT AS INTENDED. INDEED HAVE ALREADY DONE SO. WE HAVE NO NEED FOR ANY OTHER BUILDINGS IN DELHI, AND HAVE NOT REQUESTED ANY. WE WILL USE THE SOUTH BUILDING FOR A BIT LONGER, BUT I REMIND YOU THAT IT HAS THIRTY APARTMENTS IN ADDITION TO THE HOTEL. BY THE END OF THE YEAR WE WILL ONLY HAVE EIGHT AID PEOPLE IN THE WHOLE OF THE AID MISSION. I DON'T NEED IT SO I HAVE GOT RID OF IT LIKE WE AGREED TO DO. LET THIS SAD ENDING BE A LESSON TO THE NEXT ADMINISTRATOR TEMPTED BY AN EDIFICE COMPLEX.

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